

Top Secret

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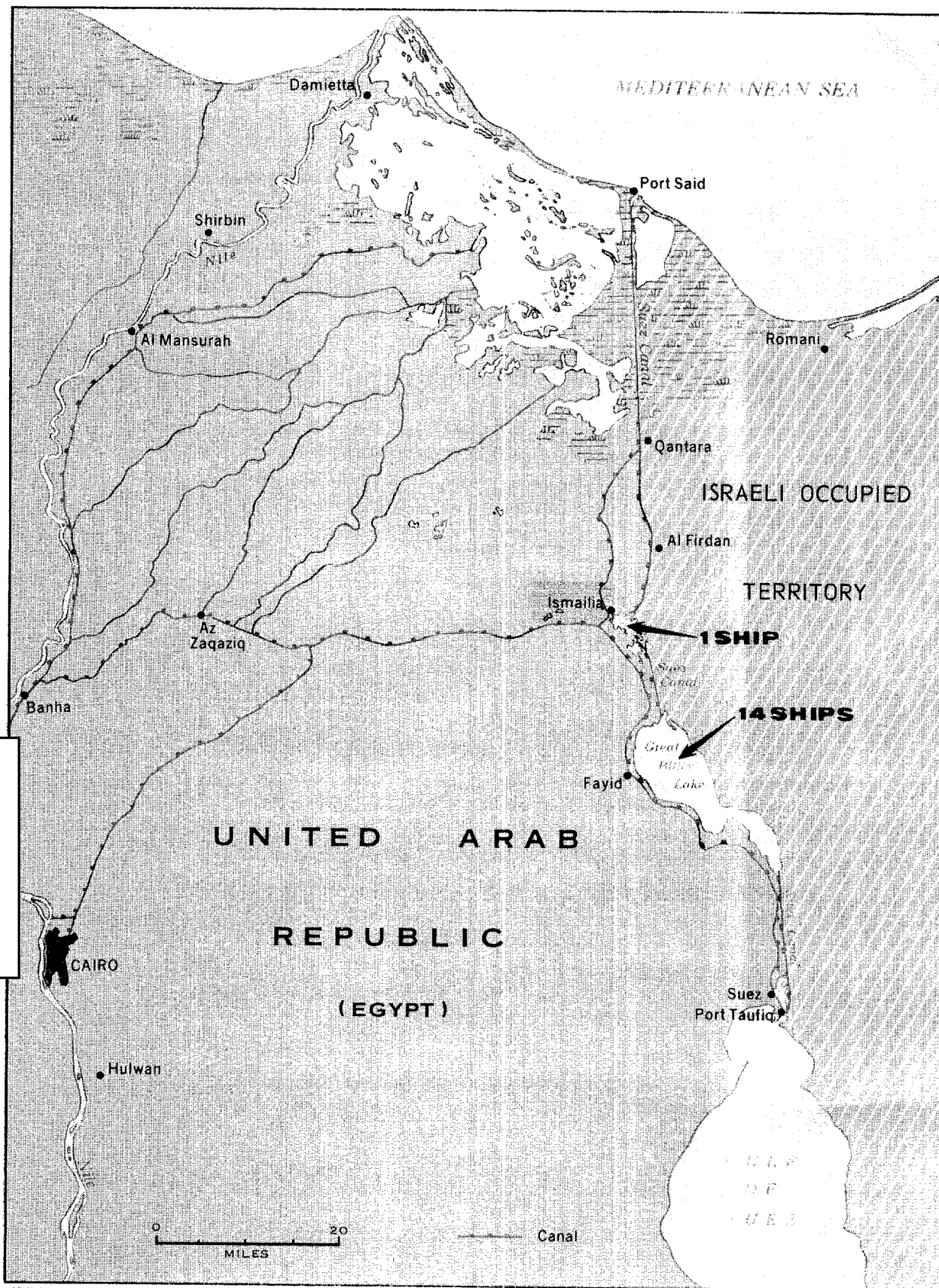
Egypt: Survey operations, prior to clearing the Suez Canal, are set to begin tomorrow. (Page 7)

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Egypt: [Egyptian operations, aimed at eventually releasing the 15 cargo ships trapped in the Suez Canal since last June, are scheduled to begin tomorrow.]

[An initial survey, using echo-sounding equipment along the entire canal, is expected to take about a week. After this the Egyptians plan to send divers down to inspect sunken obstacles south of Ismailia. It may take over two months actually to remove the trapped ships,]

[Although Egypt has maintained that Israel's agreement was not necessary in order to begin the removal work and the Egyptians reject the idea of any direct contact,]

[The issue may not be completely resolved, however, and the situation along the canal is still dangerous. Egypt apparently plans to carry out some exploratory work in the northern section of the canal, while Israel's "consent" appears to relate only to activities in the southern portion. Although Israel might hesitate to use force to stop useful, nonmilitary activities in the canal, some kind of military clash is possible.]

[Even if the survey operation goes without incident, no significant improvement in the atmosphere is likely, and the canal probably will remain closed to commercial traffic for some time.]

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NOTE

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*Brazil: [The Brazilian military, at least in the vital southern part of the country, reportedly are on alert. The reason for this is not clear but it could reflect an attempt to pressure President Costa E Silva to crack down on politicians who are attempting to stir up the populace, particularly the fiery Carlos Lacerda. Some hard line military men--mainly Army colonels--are known to be dissatisfied with Costa E Silva's lack of firm leadership and tolerance of vocal political opposition, but there has been no previous indication that they have had widespread military backing.]

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